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AGO D/A ltr, 29 Apr 1980

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IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M) (7 Nov 66) FOR OT

9 November 1966

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned (U)

TO: SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Forwarded as inclosure is Operational Report - Lessons Learned from Headquarters, 6th Battalion, 14th Artillery for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1966, dated 9 August 1966. Information contained in this report should be reviewed and evaluated by CONARC in accordance with paragraph 6c and d of AR 1-19. Evaluations and corrective actions should be reported to ACSFOR OT within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.

2. Information contained in this report is provided to the Commandants of the Service Schools to insure appropriate benefits in the future from lessons learned during current operations, and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

*Kenneth G. Wickham*

KENNETH G. WICKHAM  
Major General, USA  
The Adjutant General

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HEADQUARTERS  
6TH BATTALION 14TH ARTILLERY  
APO US Forces 96295

9 August 1966

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1966  
(RCS CSFOR-65)(U)

TO: See Distribution

Section 1. SIGNIFICANT ORGANIZATIONAL OR UNIT ACTIVITIES.

1.(U). At the start of the quarter the Battalion was closed in base camp with the following exceptions:

a. Btry D, 8" How, SP, was in position along Highway 19 east of Pleiku providing artillery support for a road opening operation. The battery departed base camp on 25 April.

b. Three (3) NCOs were on TDY to Duc Co SF Camp to teach artillery fire direction procedures and cannoneer's duties to the CIDG personnel. These NCOs departed 26 April for a tentative TDY period of two (2) to three (3) weeks and returned on 5 May.

c. One (1) officer and three (3) NCOs who were sent TDY to Dak Pek SF Camp on 27 April for the same purpose as 1b, above, returned on 5 June.

2.(U) Btry D closed in base camp on 5 May. During the operation, Btry D fired 48 rounds in two (2) registrations and 16 H & I missions. There was negative enemy contact during the period.

3.(U) On 9 May, Btry B (175mm Gun), Btry D (8" How), and Command Elements from Hq Btry moved to Plei Me SF Camp to participate in operation "PAUL REVERE". On 17 May, Btry B (-2 guns) moved to Duc Co. Effective 19 May, Bn(-) was attached to 3rd Bde, 25th Div for the duration of operation "PAUL REVERE".

4.(U) On 27 May, Btry B(-) fired 54 rounds in the vicinity of Plei Djorong SF Camp to assist in the defense of the camp. Although no casualties were assessed, no enemy activity was observed after the firing was concluded.

5.(U) Btry A(-) replaced Btry B(-) at Duc Co on 28 May. The following day, the remainder of Btry A moved to Plei Me, after which two (2) howitzers from Btry D departed for Duc Co. The Bn Metro Section moved to the 3rd Bde, 25th Div field CP, and the remainder of Btry B closed at home station on 29 May. The Metro section moved to a position six (6) km north of Plei Me on 21 June with 3rd Bde, 25th Div CP, and rejoined the Operations Platoon at Plei Me on 15 July. The section returned to home station on 31 July. All moves were accomplished without incident. The units remained in those positions through the end of the period. As of 31 July the battalion has a composite battery consisting of two (2) 8" Howitzers and two (2) 175mm Guns at Duc Co under control of CO, Btry A, and a similar composite battery at Plei Me under control of CO, Btry D. In addition, the Bn Operations Platoon is at Plei Me. A service element has been stationed at the 3rd Bde FSE to expedite moving supplies to the field locations.

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6.(U) On 1 June, Btry A, at Duc Co, fired approximately 270 rounds of 8" and 175mm ammunition for protection of a Special Forces Mike Force. No body count of casualties was assessed, but the Mike Force, which had been surrounded by a superior VC force, escaped with very light casualties.

7.(U) Btry B was on operation with the 1st Air Cav Div between 10 June and 25 June. On this operation the battery moved first to Plei M'rong SF Camp, then to Kontum, and finally was split with two (2) guns and the FDC element moving to a position approximately 15KM west-south-west of Pleiku. Negative enemy contact was established on the operation. During this period base camp was occupied by Hq Btry(-) and Svc Btry(-) only, with one (1) platoon of infantry from 3rd Bde, 25th Div for camp security.

8.(U) On 25 June, one (1) 175mm gun from Btry B malfunctioned at 2340 hours. The gun was destroyed, three (3) EM killed and six (6) EM wounded, three (3) seriously. Replacement gun, USA #12GR66 was received on 26 July.

9.(U) On 2 July, Btry A at Duc Co fired 12 rounds of 175mm ammunition in defense of Plei Djerong SF Camp. The attack broke off when the first round impacted. No casualty assessment was obtained.

10.(U) The battalion was attached to the 52nd Artillery Group, effective 20 July, per General Order 287, Hq I Field Force Vietnam, dated 29 July. The same GO detached the 77th CM Radar Detachment from the battalion and attached it to the 52nd Artillery Group. The two (2) Searchlight sections of Btry B, 29th Arty remained attached, by verbal order, to the battalion.

11.(U) During the period, the Battalion Ammunition Trains, with security elements from 3rd Bde, 25th Div, conducted ammunition and POL resupply runs to Duc Co six (6) times and to Plei Me eight (8) times. All of the trips to Plei Me were uneventful. On the trips to Duc Co, the security elements with the column hit land mines four (4) times, and battalion vehicles hit mines two (2) times. No American casualties were suffered on any of these incidents, but one (1) 5T truck was damaged on 30 June, and one (1) M140 Ammunition trailer was destroyed on 15 July. The 5T truck was repaired and completely serviceable by 011700H July.

12.(U) The battalion has suffered 18 casualties during this period, eight (8) killed and ten (10) wounded. Casualties occurred as follows:

- a. One (1) KIA self-inflicted accidentally vic Duc Co SF Camp.
- b. Two (2) KIA vic Duc Co by VC infiltrators who turned a Claymore mine around and detonated it. The infiltrators had been at Duc Co SF Camp for several months prior to this incident.
- c. Two (2) KIA and two (2) WIA at base camp while removing the perimeter mine field.
- d. Three (3) KIA and six (6) WIA when the 175mm gun malfunctioned

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- e. One (1) WIA when he detonated a CBU near Plot No SF Camp.
- f. One (1) WIA and evacuated to Japan after ingesting a punji stake in his leg while serving as an PO on patrol with Special Forces personnel.

13.(U) During the period this unit has received confirmed credit for 40 killed, one (1) wounded as a result of our fires.

14.(U) During the period the following personnel actions occurred which influence unit morale:

- a. Personnel losses - 42
- b. Personnel gains - 146
- c. Present for duty strength close of period: 32 Off, 440, 592 EM.
- d. Promotion allocations to E-4, E-5, E-6 during period - None (Ø)
- e. Mail - arrived on all but five (5) days during period.
- f. R & R quotas during period:
  - (1) 126 out-of-country.
  - (2) 24 in-country.
- g. Pay has been timely and accurate.
- h. 26 Officers and NCOs grades E-7 through E-9 have less than 60 days until DEPOS and have not received either orders or assignment instructions.

15.(U) During this period the battalion fired the following ammunition:

WEAPON	TYPE	FUZE	AMOUNT	TOTAL EXPENDED IN COUNTRY
8" How	HE	PD	5512	7346
		CVT	11	51
		MTSq	206	289
		TOTAL	5729	7686
175mm Gun	HE	ID	4980	8160
		CVT	526	622
		TOTAL	5506	8782

16.(U) The following logistics actions have taken place:

- a. Between 8 and 12 May logistical problems pertaining to operation "PAUL REVERE" were resolved. The initial problems involved water and ammunition resupply. The water problem was solved when the 3rd Bdo, 25th Div arranged to deliver one (1) water trailer to each location daily utilizing CH-47 aircraft. After 12 May, problem in delivery of water and rations was occasioned only by inclement weather which precluded the use of aircraft, or by heavy tactical requirements involving large scale use of aircraft.
- b. Two (2) water trailers were borrowed from S-4, 3rd Bdo, 25th Div to facilitate the water resupply. On 4 July, one (1) of the battalion water trailers was dropped by a CH-47 during resupply and was completely demolished. Battalion is now short two (2) water trailers,

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one which became unserviceable on operation "LINCOLN" on 4 April and the present loss.

c. As sponsors for the 52nd Artillery Group and 3rd Bn, 6th Artillery, the S-4 submitted requisitions for bunker and barrier material, established account numbers, acquired and erected tentage for the advance parties. The battalion provided water, rations, and quarters for the advance parties from 8 through 18 June, and water and rations for Hq Btry 52nd Artillery Group from 18 June through 22 July.

d. Requisitions were placed for 100,000 sandbags to construct field fortifications for the positions at Duc Co and Floi Ho SF Camps. To date these requisitions have not been filled. Follow-up action through supply channels indicates that none are available in this area at the present time.

17.(C) The following are critical supply shortages. Follow-up action has been initiated with negative response at the present time.

QUANTITY	ITEM	REQUISITION DATE
1 ea	Truck, utility, $\frac{1}{2}$ T, M151	15 Mar 66
1 ea	Truck, cargo, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ T	3 June 66
2 ea	Trailer, water, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ T	2 Apr 66, 4 Jul 66
9 Sets	Fan bolts for $\frac{1}{2}$ T truck, M151	31 Jan, 17 Jun, 19 Jun, 21 Jun
56 ea	12V Automotive battery	27 Apr, 19 Jun, 22 Jun, 19 Jul
	Survey components (measuring tapes, range poles, tape repair sections, hand levels, and survey sets, 4th order)	10 Apr 66
1 ea	Tank, liquid storage	30 May 66

18.(U) On 19 July, this unit was visited by Major General Anderson, CG Army Materiel Command. During his visit, the use of the Gun Direction Computer, M18 (F/D.C) in Vietnam was discussed. MG Anderson explained that AMC desired to have the Computer field tested in RVN on a reduced scale prior to issuing it to all units. The Commanding Officer, 6th Bn, 14th Arty, then stated that we would like to be one of the units selected to field test the equipment.

19.(U) During the period of this report, the battalion spent 89 days on combat operations.

## Section 2. COMMANDER'S OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

### Part 1. Observations (Lessons Learned)

#### 1.(U) Communications:

- a. ITEM: Difficulties in long range FM communications.

DISCUSSION: The increased range of the FM series FM radios, and the large number of units in the area causes communication problems. Units with frequencies 0.05 MC apart cut out each other's transmissions and override the other unit's frequencies. Additionally, the problem of harmonic interference appears to be increased, resulting in transmissions being cut out by other units. Also, when operating at or near maximum

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range during the monsoon season, communications becomes virtually impossible for several hours each day.

OBSERVATION: Communications officers at all levels must exercise very close supervision of assignment of frequencies. The use of AM radio for voice transmissions might serve to decrease the congestion on the FM frequency bands. The issue, to selected units, of a suitable AM radio on the basis of one (1) per firing battery and two (2) per battalion operations center would provide satisfactory conditions to test this possibility.

b. ITEM: Changing unit radio call signs.

DISCUSSION: When any unit changes its radio call signs, as should be done periodically for security reasons, all units with whom it normally works should be notified. However, the fluid tactical situation, and the difficulty of making distribution to all units requiring such information, makes it extremely difficult to insure that all units have the up-to-date items. Additionally, since an artillery battalion may work with any unit in the area, a non-divisional GS battalion must maintain current SOI's for all units in the appropriate corps area.

OBSERVATION: Unit radio call signs should not be changed once they are assigned and it has been verified that no other unit has conflicting call signs. Frequencies should be changed periodically on direction from higher headquarters after screening to insure that the maximum amount of frequency interference is eliminated.

## 2.(U) Logistics.

ITEM: Difficulties were encountered in providing potable water to widely dispersed units.

DISCUSSION: Resupply by air becomes mandatory when units are widely dispersed and the road network is not suitable for convey movement. When the local water cannot be purified by chemical means, potable water must be flown in daily. When approximately 150 to 250 personnel are in the position, this requires at least one (1) water trailer or bladder per day, thus tying up aircraft which could be utilized elsewhere.

OBSERVATION: The issue of three (3) GPM water purification systems per battalion would greatly relieve the aircraft requirements for water resupply.

## Part 2. Recommendations.

1.(U) In the Operational Report on Lessons Learned for the period ending 30 April 66, it was recommended that the M18 Gun Direction Computer be issued to this unit as soon as possible. Based on the conference with Major General Anderson (para 17, see 1 above), recommend action be taken to obtain sufficient sets for this unit to field test the computer in accordance with his desires.

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2.(U) Water purification System: Recommended changes in personnel and equipment which were submitted to I Field Force Vietnam Artillery on 26 July included the addition of personnel and equipment for two (2) 6000 gallon per minute purification units. Subsequent reevaluation indicates that one (1) water purification unit per firing battery is more appropriate. Recommend that action be taken to expedite this item.

3.(U) The shortage of two (2) of the battalion's five (5) water trailers and the survey equipment (section 1, para 16 above) seriously hampers the operational capability of the unit. Recommend action be taken to expedite issue of these items.

*Charles C. Williams*  
CHARLES C. WILLIAMS  
Lt Col, Arty  
Commanding

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SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1966  
RC3(CSFR-65) (U)

HEADQUARTERS, 52D ARTILLERY GROUP, APO 96295, 10 August 1966

TO: Headquarters, Department of the Army, ATTN: ACSPOR, Washington,  
D. C. 20310

1. Forwarded.
2. Concur in commander's observations. Report is considered adequate.

*O. L. Tobiasch*  
O. L. TOBIASCH  
Colonel, Artillery  
Commanding

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